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SUBJECT: DEMARCHE ON AMIS RE-HAT: GHANA

REF: SECSTATE 01351

1. (SBU) On January 5, PolOff met with Ministry of Foreign Affairs Director of African Union Affairs Kwabena Baah-Doudou to urge the Government of Ghana to press the AU to request that the UN begin planning to re-hat the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) in 2006, per reftel.

2. (SBU) Baah-Doudou inquired why the U.S. sought to remove the mission from the AU. Per reftel, PolOff assured him that the U.S. appreciated Ghana's contribution to AMIS and the results the Mission had achieved. PolOff emphasized that re-hatting the mission to a UN peacekeeping operation was congruent with the AU's plans for AMIS and that the USG believes the UN must begin planning now for the future. PolOff added that the USG hoped to introduce a resolution authorizing the planning for a re-hat during its presidency of the Security Council in February.

3. (SBU) Unprompted, Baah-Doudou then raised the AU's financial and logistical difficulties identified in the recent assessment mission report as if to suggest that these issues prompted the USG to seek a re-hat. (Note: Baah-Doudou said the GOG had not seen the report's recommendations yet, but he clearly seemed briefed on its contents. End note.) PolOff responded by asking if Baah-Doudou expected the report to contain any recommendations relevant to the GOG's position. Baah-Doudou acknowledged AMIS' difficulties and said the GOG was concerned about them. He said the GOG would have to review the report's recommendations at Addis Ababa on January 11 and consider the USG's offer of assistance before recommending any course of action to the AU. Commenting on the USG position, he said, "This is important. We will give this all the due weight it deserves."

4. (SBU) Comment: Baah-Doudou seemed concerned that the USG may regard AMIS as a failure and be seeking a re-hat to place responsibilities in more capable hands. It is unclear how this sensitivity may influence the GOG's decisions on this issue.

BRIDGEWATER